



# Data Access Description

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## Delineation of Problem Housing Areas

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### INTRODUCTION

The Bureau of the Census has been concerned with the development of reliable measures of housing quality since it first collected housing statistics on a large scale in the 1940 Census of Housing. In the decennial censuses from 1940 through 1960, the Census Bureau collected data about the structural condition of housing by direct observation. These data have proved to be unreliable and inaccurate.

In the 1970 census, the Census Bureau did not collect information on the structural condition of housing. It did collect data on the presence of complete plumbing facilities, which in 1940, 1950, and 1960 have been used in combination with condition data to provide a key criterion for evaluating the adequacy of the Nation's housing.

In response to urgent requests from users of housing statistics, however, the Bureau agreed to provide estimates of substandard housing in 1970 for all cities of 10,000 or more and for counties.

The term "substandard" is not an official Census Bureau classification. For the purposes of this Data Access Description, the definition used by the Federal housing agencies has been adopted: A substandard housing unit is one which was (1) rated dilapidated by a census enumerator, or (2) lacked one or more of the following facilities: Piped hot water, flush toilet for private use, bathtub or shower for private use.

The Bureau of the Census suggests that those interested in evaluating the quality of housing at the small-area level use 1970 housing data, available on summary tapes and in the printed reports, as a basis for delineating and studying problem housing areas. A possible method of using 1970 data in the study of housing and neighborhood quality at the local level is described in this Data Access Description. In addition, background information is provided on the methods of collecting data on quality of housing in past censuses; the resulting data are evaluated; and the 1970 "substandard" housing estimates to be published in volume VI of the housing report series are briefly described.

There is no precise solution to the problems of defining substandard housing and of locating areas where such housing exists. The procedures outlined in this Data Access Description are designed to be suggestive. They are limited as to kinds of data and their use. Valuable data for delineating problem areas can also be obtained from police, welfare, health and education departments.

### BACKGROUND--MEASURING HOUSING QUALITY IN PREVIOUS CENSUSES

In each of the decennial censuses from 1940 to 1960, the Census Bureau had enumerators

assess the structural condition of housing by direct observation. The criteria and terminology for judging structural condition were changed for each census, based on the results of data from each previous census. The method of collecting these data in the 1940, 1950, and 1960 censuses and the quality of the resulting statistics for each decade are discussed briefly below.

### 1940 Census of Housing

In the 1940 census, "state of repairs" was used as an indicator of the structural quality of housing units. Under the major classification of state of repairs were two categories: units "not needing major repairs" and units "needing major repairs." A unit was to be classified as needing major repairs if parts of the structure, such as floors, roof, walls, or foundation, required major repairs or replacements. The enumerator judged the repair to be major on the basis of whether or not the continued neglect of the deficiency would impair the soundness of the structure and create a hazard for its occupants.

This concept measured only the physical condition of the structure; it did not indicate the level of quality. Under this concept, a tarpaper shack or a unit with a dirt floor may have been classified as not needing major repairs even though it may not have provided adequate protection from the elements. In addition, the state of repairs measurement required a judgment by the enumerator regarding a future condition: Whether or not the continued neglect of the deficiency would impair the soundness of the structure and create a hazard.

Dissatisfaction with the results of the state of repairs concept was so great that an Interdepartmental Subcommittee on Housing Adequacy was appointed by the Bureau of the Budget in 1945 to investigate the problems of measuring the quality of housing. The subcommittee worked closely with representatives of the Census Bureau and the 1950 Census of Housing Technical Advisory Committee to develop the concept "condition of structure," which was to be used as the indicator of structural quality in the 1950 Census of Housing.

### 1950 Census of Housing

The concept of "condition of structure" was first employed in the 1950 census and, in accordance with it, housing units were classified as either "not dilapidated" or "dilapidated." A unit was to be reported as dilapidated if it had one or more serious deficiencies or was of such poor original construction that it provided inadequate shelter or endangered the safety of the occupants. In addition, a unit was to be classified as dilapidated if it had a combination of minor deficiencies to the extent that it did not provide protection against the elements or was physically unsafe.

Although the condition of structure concept was considered an improvement over the state of repairs concept, many users of the 1950 statistics, particularly those concerned with urban renewal, expressed the need for an intermediate level of condition. In preparation for the 1960 census, the Census Bureau, assisted by an Interdepartmental Subcommittee on Housing Adequacy, developed a two-fold classification--sound or deteriorating--to replace the 1950 category "not dilapidated."

### 1960 Census of Housing

In the 1960 census, special efforts were made to maintain the 1950 definition "dilapidated." The 1950 "not dilapidated" category was subdivided in 1960 into two categories, sound and deteriorating. A sound unit was one which had no defects or only slight defects which normally would be corrected during the course of regular maintenance. A deteriorating unit was defined as needing more repair than would be provided during the course of regular maintenance.

The difficulty experienced by enumerators in 1960 in determining whether or not housing units should be classified as dilapidated had an adverse effect on the quality of the statistics for the standard-substandard classification as used by the Federal housing agencies. Evidence indicates that about one-fourth of the units which could be classified as substandard from the findings of one group of enumerators would have been differently classified according to the findings of another group of enumerators. The accuracy of data contained in cross-tabulations using the standard-substandard classification was affected adversely since, of necessity, it depended on the accurate rating of individual units. However, trends in substandard housing appear to have been measured adequately for the decade 1950 to 1960.

### Procedural Summary

Procedurally, the application of the concepts for evaluating housing was virtually the same in the 1940, 1950, and 1960 decennial censuses. The enumerators were instructed to observe each unit and to make an overall judgment based on specified criteria. The overall judgment was to be made for each unit separately, regardless of the neighborhood, age of structure, and race of the occupants. Unlike 1940, when the Enumerator's Reference Manual was the only training source, the enumerators in 1950 were provided with detailed written criteria and instructions, as well as photographs depicting the two levels of condition (dilapidated and not dilapidated). In addition, audiovisual techniques were used to train enumerators. In 1960 the training techniques were essentially the same as in 1950, except that modifications were made to reflect the three-way



classification. The 1960 enumerators were instructed to determine, first, whether a unit was dilapidated or not dilapidated in order to maintain comparability with the 1950 enumeration of condition. Then, if the unit was not dilapidated, the enumerators were to determine whether it was sound or deteriorating.

However, post-enumeration studies after the censuses of 1950 and 1960 disclosed that the information collected on structural condition of housing in these censuses was unreliable. Of the occupied units classified as dilapidated by the post-census enumerators, only about 48 percent had been similarly classified by the regular census enumerators in 1950 and 38 percent in 1960. Also, the 1960 Content Evaluation Survey disclosed that there was a net understatement of more than one million dilapidated occupied housing units in 1960. Additional detail on the reliability and accuracy of statistics in the 1950 and 1960 censuses can be found in Census Bureau Working Paper No. 25, Measuring the Quality of Housing: An Appraisal of Census Statistics and Methods.

### THE 1970 CENSUS OF HOUSING

Estimates of substandard housing will be published in volume VI, which is expected to be available by the end of 1972. These statistics will be presented as a single figure for each city of 10,000 or more inhabitants and for each county, SMSA, State, division, and region of the United States for the following categories: Negro, and white and other races, by renter- and owner-occupied units and year-round vacant units.

The 1970 substandard housing figure will be the sum of two categories: (1) units counted in the 1970 census which lack complete private plumbing facilities and (2) an estimate of the number of units with complete private plumbing facilities that would have been rated dilapidated in 1970, according to the Census Bureau's estimating procedure. The details of this computational method are described in "Proposed Procedure for Estimating Substandard Housing in 1970"; copies are available from Housing Division, Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233.

### USING 1970 CENSUS DATA LOCALLY TO DELINEATE PROBLEM HOUSING AREAS

Although 1970 census data are not sufficiently detailed to permit identification or classification of individual housing units as poor or substandard, it is possible to use census data to identify specific areas, such as blocks, tracts, and minor civil divisions, in which poor housing is probably located. These areas will be termed "problem housing areas."

It should be stressed that there is no generally accepted set of criteria for defining substandard housing. Nevertheless, although precise criteria are wanting, this term is generally understood to refer to housing which is characterized by conditions that are hazardous to health and safety and are detrimental to the general welfare. It is in that sense that the terms poor or substandard are used in this section.

The emphasis on small-area analysis at the local level stems from the view that an adequate assessment of the amount of substandard housing requires an evaluation not only of the residential structure but of its environment as well. This view is elaborated in the report to Congress and the President, "Building the American City," prepared in 1968 by the National Commission on Urban Problems. In one of a number of comments on this point, the Commission asks:

"Is a unit correctly defined as standard under available data if the lot next door is littered with garbage; if police protection is limited; if street lights are not provided; if the sidewalk is buckled; if the street is full of potholes; if a liquor store is found on each corner; if sewers are nonexistent or inadequate; if the noise level is excessive; or if a rendering works is found in the block (as is true along the waterfront in the otherwise exclusive Georgetown area of Washington, D.C.)?"

### Selection of Areas Suitable for Study

The basic unit of action in most localities is likely to be a group of city blocks. The scope of an area selected for treatment will depend upon a number of factors. One of the most important of these is the extent to which individual blocks in a selected area are similar or identical in their housing and household characteristics.

The definition of problem housing areas is best made by comparison. Therefore, it is suggested that the study area be defined to include fringe as well as hard-core problem sections.

### Census Indicators of Problem Housing Areas

A number of measures are relevant as indicators of substandard housing. These are classified in table 1 according to type and availability by census tracts (or minor civil divisions) or blocks in the 1970 census publications. A more detailed outline of cross-tabulations of the items in table 1 is shown in tables 2 and 3, which refer to

data contained in the Third and Fourth Count Summary Tapes.<sup>1</sup> The tapes contain considerably more detail than do the printed reports.

The items listed in table 1 are not intended to be all-inclusive nor should they be considered equally applicable in all areas. Because circumstances vary from place to place, it is unlikely that every item will be of equal importance for all cities or even for all areas within the same city. For example, if low rent is selected as a criterion, one should be aware of the special situation posed by public housing. Census data should be used to supplement, not to replace, knowledge of local conditions.

### Suggested Uses of Census Data for Studying These Areas

Once the areas in need of further investigation have been located and census indicators of problem housing considered, the next step is to decide how to use this information. Census statistics can be used in a number of ways to study problem areas. A suggested set of items useful for this purpose is shown below, identified by the column numbers under which they appear in the published 1970 census reports, Block Statistics, Series HC(3). Local conditions should determine which of these items are most appropriate in a given situation.

#### Suggested Items From Table 2, Block Statistics Reports

	<u>Column Number</u>
<u>Structure and Facility Statistics</u>	
1. All year-round housing units lacking some or all plumbing facilities	Col. 8
<u>Occupancy and Utilization Statistics</u>	
2. Housing units with 1.01 or more persons per room	Col. 21
3. Housing units with 1.01 or more persons per room, lacking complete plumbing facilities	Subtract col. 22 from col. 21

<sup>1</sup>Part of a series of six summary tapes from the 1970 Census of Population and Housing. The Third Count Summary Tapes contain complete-count (100-percent) summary statistics for blocks. The Fourth Count Summary Tapes provide sample data down to the level of census tracts and minor civil divisions. Further information on this program may be obtained by writing to the Chief, Data User Services Office, Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233.

#### Economic Status

4. Average value of owner-occupied housing units	Col. 14
5. Average contract rent of renter-occupied housing units	Col. 19

#### Household Composition

6. One-person households	Col. 23
7. Families with female head	Col. 24
8. Units with roomers, boarders, or lodgers	Col. 25

At the simplest level of study it may be sufficient to identify blocks according to the characteristics--selected from those suggested above--which are present. For example, a checklist would identify blocks which have rent or value below specified amounts, percent of units which lack plumbing, etc. (See illustration on p. 5.) Blocks could be grouped according to the number or kind of items checked for each block. Perhaps the most difficult decision in this procedure would be the determination of a cutoff for rent and value which would represent a problem area and would depend upon local conditions. A visual examination of several pilot blocks, compared with their average rent as reported in the census, might provide a "feeling" for a practical cutoff. Such factors as type of housing unit, presence of public housing, and other environmental factors would have to be considered.

The use of maps to display the various kinds of data indicative of problem housing areas can be very helpful in understanding the geographic implications of the data. Different kinds of data can be displayed in varying patterns (i.e., color, shading, and crosshatching) and as a result, spatial relationships and trends become immediately apparent. Data maps can also be produced by computer.

At a more complex level, it may be useful to examine blocks not only according to the presence of certain characteristics, but also according to the degree these characteristics are present. One way to measure this degree is to limit the items to be checked off to those which exceed a specified standard. Citywide averages could serve as such a standard. Thus, suppose that 6 percent of the occupied units in a particular city are occupied by 1.01 or more persons per room. Using this hypothetical situation, one could locate problem areas by identifying those blocks in which the proportion of such units exceeds the citywide average (6 percent) plus some constant, e.g., 2 percent. Whatever the constant, it should distinguish blocks with a high concentration of the selected characteristic. It should also be possible, by employing a range of



Blocks by Selected Indicators of Problem Housing Areas

Block number	Rent (or value) below specified amount	Units lacking some or all plumbing facilities	Units occupied by 1.01 or more persons per room	Households with female head of family	Households with roomers, boarders, or lodgers	Total indicators in each block
101	X	X		X		3
102	X	X	X	X	X	5
103	X		X	X		3
104		X	X			2
201	X	X		X	X	4
202						0
203	X	X	X	X		4

cutoffs (e.g., city average plus 2 percent or less; city average plus 2 to 4 percent, etc.), to obtain some indication of relative severity of conditions in different neighborhoods.

The same method used for blocks can be applied to census tracts. Although a much wider array of data is available by census tracts than by blocks, census tracts have an offsetting disadvantage in that boundaries of problem neighborhoods may not correspond to census tract boundaries.

If census tracts are to be the basic survey areas, it is suggested that only those factors be recorded in each tract for which the level of occurrence is greater than a specified norm or standard, e.g., the citywide proportion of units with the specified characteristic.

A relatively simple method to determine the order of severity of poor neighborhood and housing conditions in blocks (or tracts) is to (1) rank each block or tract in the survey area by the percent of units or households with specified characteristics, (2) sum the ranks of the various characteristics for each block or tract, and (3) order the blocks or tracts by those sums. It is necessary that, for each characteristic, the rank of 1 have the same meaning. For example, if the highest percent of units that lack complete plumbing is assigned the rank of 1, then this rank number should uniformly indicate the block with the highest proportion of units that are potential problem areas. Thus, the block with the lowest average rent would also be ranked 1 with respect to rent. The ranking procedure is illustrated in table 4.

To take a specific example, table 4 shows that tract 501 ranked 1, based on the sum of ranks.

That result should be considered a first step in sorting the tracts according to the concentration of housing and household characteristics indicative of problem neighborhoods and housing. A more detailed examination of the results will reveal, for example, that in some tracts the range in rank between highest and lowest is much greater than in others. This type of analysis can lead to a sorting of tracts according to their degree of diversity or homogeneity. It can also be observed that tracts differ from one another according to the characteristic which is most predominant. Keeping this fact in mind, one could perform another sorting based on more than one characteristic, e.g., availability of plumbing and occupancy by 1.01 or more persons per room.

In summary, no single statistic should be considered as a complete index to the type and degree of conditions indicative of poor neighborhoods and housing; rather, a combination of approaches, along with knowledge of local conditions, is likely to produce the most accurate delineation of problem housing areas.

#### FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information on the concept of substandard housing as it relates to Census Bureau data, address inquiries to:

Director  
Bureau of the Census  
Washington, D. C. 20233

(Please refer to Data Access Description No. 28, Delineation of Problem Housing Areas, Series CEP-6.)

Table 1.—Types of Data Available by Census Tracts and Blocks in Printed Reports

	Census tracts or minor civil divisions	Blocks
1. Structure and facilities		
a. Number of housing units with complete plumbing facilities	X	X
b. Type of heating equipment	X	
c. Number of units by age of structure	X	
2. Tenure and use		
a. Number of owner- and renter-occupied units	X	X
b. Units occupied by 1.01 or more persons per room	X	X
c. Number of vacant units, by length of time vacant	X	
3. Economic status		
a. Amount of family income	X	
b. Number of families with income below poverty levels	X	
c. Number of families which received welfare payments	X	
d. Amount of rent paid	X	X
e. Value of owner-occupied units	X	X
4. Education and occupation		
a. Number of school years completed	X	
b. Employment as household or service workers	X	
5. Household composition		
a. Households with female head and with children under 18	X	
b. Households with roomers, boarders, or lodgers	X	X
c. One-person households	X	X

Table 2.—Tabulations Available From Third Count Summary Tapes

(The numbers below refer to the housing data item on Third Count Summary Tapes)

3rd Count (Blocks)	Structure and facilities; availability of plumbing	Occupancy and utilization		
		Tenure	Negro occupied	Persons per room
Structure and facilities: Availability of plumbing...		29,31	29,31	31
Occupancy and utilization: Tenure and race of head....	29,31			16,34
Economic Status: Value.....	32a,32b	32a,22a, 32b,22b	22b,32b	
Rent.....	33a,33b	23a,33a, 23b,33b	23b,33b	
Household composition: One-person households.....		27		
Families with female head..		27		
Units with roomers, boarders, or lodgers.....		28		



Table 3.—Tabulations Available From Fourth Count Summary Tapes—Continued

(The numbers below refer to housing data items, except for those preceded by a "p" which refer to population data items)

	Structure and facilities			Occupancy and utilization, tenure and race	Economic status			Social status			Household composition	
	Year structure built	Lacking direct access; complete kitchen facilities	Availability of plumbing facilities		Value	Rent	Income	Education, years of school completed	Disability and employment status	Occupation	Female head	One-person household
Fourth Count: Census Tracts												
Household composition												
Race of head.....	8, 108, 120, 126	43, 44	59, 60, 123, 142		52, 53,	54, 55	110, 117, 118, 127	P. 42	P. 52	P. 54, P. 57	108, 110	40, 40, 40
Sex of head.....												
Age of head.....	108			38, 110			110					
Civilian male family												
Head 14 to 64.....							P. 87			P. 87		
Head 65 and over.....							P. 86					
Age of person.....							P. 85			P. 54, P. 57		
16 years old and over...												
25 years old and over...												
16 to 64 years old.....								P. 42	P. 52			
Males 20-49 years old												
and females 15-44 years old.....												
65 years old.....								P. 53				
Household type.....	108			38			P. 90					
Female family heads with related children under 6.....										P. 88		
Presence of own children under 18.....												
With roomers, boarders, or lodgers.....				41			P. 85, P. 88			P. 57		



Table 4.—Tracts Ranked by Selected Indicators of Problem Areas

Tract	All housing units						All occupied units										Sum of ranks	Ranks by sum of ranks
	Total	Lacking some or all plumbing		Lacking complete kitchen facilities and access		1- and 2-room housing units		Total	Units with roomers, boarders, or lodgers		Units with 1.01 + persons per room		Median value, owner-occupied		Median rent, renter-occupied			
		Percent	Rank	Percent	Rank	Percent	Rank		Percent	Rank	Amount	Rank	Amount	Rank				
															Percent	Rank		
301...	236	18.2	5	18.6	1	12.7	10	202	11.9	2	9.9	3	8,600	6	61	6.5	33.5	2
403...	2,621	6.6	12.5	8.9	4	32.7	3	2,401	4.1	10.5	2.2	30	40,500	31	143	31	122	17
501...	1,735	20.3	4	13.9	2	22.1	6	1,538	12.0	1	9.7	4	8,200	3.5	58	4	24.5	1
507...	672	7.7	9	6.8	8	26.8	4	595	8.4	4	2.5	28.5	10,000	13	138	30	96.5	13
604...	722	6.6	12.5	1.1	24	2.6	21	665	1.7	22.5	8.4	10.5	8,500	5	59	5	100.5	14
705...	1,321	5.8	14	3.5	14.5	16.3	7	1,152	5.0	6.5	1.6	31	15,100	23.5	128	29	125.5	19.5
803...	492	5.7	15	3.0	16	26.6	5	461	5.0	6.5	4.1	26	17,500	29	123	28	125.5	19.5
901...	1,273	9.2	7	3.5	14.5	6.9	13	1,225	2.0	18.5	9.1	6	8,200	3.5	54	3	65.5	8
1004...	1,493	1.1	28	1.8	17.5	1.9	26.5	1,457	1.9	20	4.5	24	15,100	23.5	90	20	159.5	25
1103...	552	2.4	21	5.3	11	14.5	9	521	0.6	31	6.9	16	12,600	17.5	82	19	124.5	18
1201...	398	4.0	20	1.3	22	2.5	22.5	395	2.0	18.5	5.6	19	15,300	25	78	17	144	22
1207...	1,013	8.9	8	8.7	5	6.6	14	898	10.2	3	10.1	2	10,400	14	73	14.5	60.5	6.5
1306...	1,764	1.7	23	0.9	25.5	1.9	26.5	1,659	3.6	12	6.2	18	13,900	20	121	27	152	23
1406...	1,569	2.1	22	1.8	17.5	4.0	16.5	1,536	2.3	17	2.5	28.5	21,800	30	105	25	156.5	24
1501...	661	4.8	17	1.7	19.5	2.4	24	627	3.5	13	8.1	12.5	9,900	12	63	8	106	15
1507...	2,664	1.4	26.5	0.9	25.5	2.9	20	2,603	1.6	24	3.3	27	15,400	26	100	23	172	28
1701...	206	27.2	2	4.9	12	11.2	11	175	2.9	15	8.6	9	7,200	2	48	1	52	5
1804...	1,196	4.5	19	4.8	13	3.5	18.5	1,097	2.6	16	9.6	5	8,900	7	67	10	88.5	9
1904...	1,631	4.8	17	1.7	19.5	5.2	15	1,556	3.0	14	8.7	8	9,100	8.5	72	13	95.0	10
1910...	2,310	1.6	24.5	1.2	23	1.3	28	2,280	1.2	28	5.0	21	14,700	22	95	22	168.5	27
2006...	192	1.6	24.5	0.5	28.5	-	30.5	186	1.1	29	4.3	25	11,600	16	73	14.5	168	26
2012...	225	0.4	31	0.4	30	-	30.5	223	1.3	26.5	8.1	12.5	14,000	21	93	21	172.5	29
2201...	764	40.6	1	9.2	3	58.1	1	674	5.2	5	5.0	21	9,200	10	67	10	51	4
2302...	1,768	27.0	3	8.4	6	40.4	2	1,345	4.9	8	7.4	15	9,100	8.5	53	2	44.5	3
2502...	830	9.6	6	5.8	10	14.7	8	701	4.1	10.5	8.8	7	6,100	1	79	18	60.5	6.5
2603...	228	4.8	17	7.0	7	2.2	25	215	4.7	9	8.4	10.5	12,600	17.5	67	10	96	11.5
2609...	1,158	1.4	26.5	0.2	31	4.0	16.5	1,112	0.7	30	28.1	1	13,800	19	77	16	140	21
2705...	1,555	6.7	11	1.6	21	3.5	18.5	1,508	1.3	26.5	7.6	14	9,600	11	61	6.5	108.5	16
2804...	1,307	0.6	30	0.5	28.5	2.5	22.5	1,279	1.5	25	4.6	23	16,000	28	113	26	183	31
3001...	2,195	7.3	10	6.1	9	7.1	12	2,079	1.8	21	6.4	17	11,200	15	71	12	96	11.5
3203...	1,055	0.9	29	0.7	27	0.8	29	1,040	1.7	22.5	5.0	21	15,700	27	104	24	179.5	30

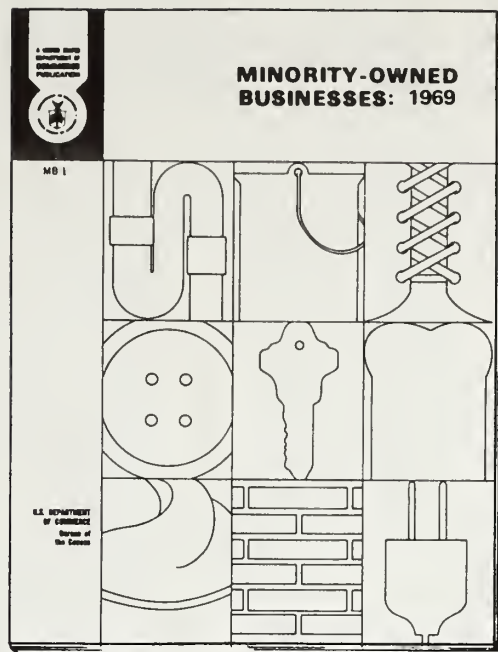


A New Report of  
National Interest---

# MINORITY- OWNED BUSINESSES: 1969

U.S. DEPARTMENT  
OF COMMERCE

Bureau of  
the Census



## "Minority-Owned Businesses: 1969" MB-1

This report offers the first set of comprehensive statistical data, compiled in this area, on the minority ownership of businesses in this country. It focuses on the economic characteristics of the principal minority groups, i.e., Negro, Spanish-speaking, and other racial minorities. Wherever possible, the Spanish-speaking group has been classified in terms of ownership by those of Mexican-American, Puerto Rican, Cuban, and Latin American ancestry.

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Street address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, and ZIP Code \_\_\_\_\_



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